

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 8, 2004

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 9, 2003

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 2, 2003

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2003–04 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 857

Introduced by Assembly Member Frommer

February 20, 2003

An act to add and repeal Part 4 (commencing with Section 1000) of Division 1 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to autism.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 857, as amended, Frommer. Developmental disabilities: autism.

The Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act requires the State Department of Developmental Services to contract with regional centers for the provision of various services and supports to persons with developmental disabilities, including autism. Existing law requires the department to develop evaluation and diagnostic procedures for the diagnosis of autism disorder and all other autistic spectrum disorders that may be utilized by clinical staff at regional centers, and to develop a corresponding training program for the staff to be implemented on or before July 1, 2002.

This bill would establish within the department, an Autism Information Resource Center (office) pilot program, to initially serve families in Los Angeles County in order to test the efficacy of assisting families by designating a single agency as a central source of information for autism treatment and support services, and other

information about autism. The office would be headed by an Autism Information Resources Director who would be appointed by the Director of Developmental Services.

This bill would require the office to assist families in Los Angeles County to identify appropriate services for autistic children from available resources, including, but not limited to, private health insurance plans, departmental services, regional centers, and services within the State Department of Education and local school districts.

This bill would require the department to use existing resources and seek federal and private funding to implement the provisions of the bill. *The bill would require the department to evaluate the pilot program and to report its findings to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2008.* This bill would provide that the pilot program will be repealed on January 1, 2009.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) Children are being diagnosed with autism spectrum
4 disorders at an alarming and rapidly increasing rate, with these
5 disorders affecting as many as one in 250 children.

6 (b) The State Department of Developmental Services
7 documented a 273 percent increase in the number of autism cases
8 in California alone. This number was later substantiated by a
9 followup study conducted by the M.I.N.D. Institute at the ~~U.C.~~ UC
10 Davis Medical Center.

11 (c) Numerous studies have established the importance and
12 effectiveness of early intervention and treatment for infants
13 diagnosed with an autistic disorder.

14 (d) As the number of children with autism spectrum disorders
15 continues to increase, there is also increased need for assistance in
16 helping families find available services and supports.

17 (e) By necessity, families of children with autism spectrum
18 disorders seek treatment, services, and assistance from a wide
19 array of public and private health care, educational, and social
20 services resources.



(f) Families would be better able to access early intervention and appropriate treatment or services for autism spectrum disorders if information and assistance regarding existing support services, treatment services, education services, and parent's rights and options were available from a single agency.

SEC. 2. Part 4 (commencing with Section 1000) is added to Division 1 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

PART 4. *AUTISM* INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER
PILOT PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN
WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

1000. For purposes of this part, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Department" means the State Department of Developmental Services.

(b) "Office" means the Autism Information Resource Center.

1010. An Autism Information Resource Center is created as a pilot program within the department to initially serve families in Los Angeles County in order to test the efficacy of assisting families by designating a single agency as a central source of information for autism treatment and support services, and other information about autism.

1020. The office shall be headed by the Autism Information Resources Director, who shall be appointed by the Director of Developmental Services.

1030. The office shall assist families in Los Angeles County to identify appropriate services for autistic children from available resources, including, but not limited to, private health insurance plans, departmental services, regional centers, and services within the State Department of Education and local school districts.

1040. The department shall assign personnel to the office. The department may employ or contract with experts when necessary to carry out the functions of the office, to the extent permitted by law.

1050. (a) This part shall be implemented with existing resources, along with resources available pursuant to subdivision (b).

(b) The department shall seek federal and private funding sources for purposes of funding the office.

1 1055. (a) *The department shall conduct an evaluation of the*
2 *pilot program's efficiency in assisting families with identifying and*
3 *securing appropriate treatment and support services as well as*
4 *information on autism spectrum disorders, parents' rights, and*
5 *options.*

6 (b) *The department shall report its findings to the Legislature*
7 *on or before January 1, 2008.*

8 1060. This part shall remain in effect only until January 1,
9 2009, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute,
10 that is enacted before January 1, 2009, deletes or extends that date.

